

1997-98 SESSION
COMMITTEE HEARING
RECORDS

Committee Name:

Joint Committee on
Finance (JC-Fi)

Sample:

Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

- 05hrAC-EdR_RCP_pt01a
- 05hrAC-EdR_RCP_pt01b
- 05hrAC-EdR_RCP_pt02

➤ Appointments ... Appt

➤ **

➤ Clearinghouse Rules ... CRule

➤ **

➤ Committee Hearings ... CH

➤ **

➤ Committee Reports ... CR

➤ **

➤ Executive Sessions ... ES

➤ **

➤ Hearing Records ... HR

➤ **

➤ Miscellaneous ... Misc

➤ 97hrJC-Fi_Misc_pt162

➤ Record of Comm. Proceedings ... RCP

➤ **



1853 N. STEVENS STREET
P.O. BOX 1028
RHINELANDER, WI 54501-1028

RICHARD SICCHIO
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
715-365-2525

LARRY THOMPSON
PRESIDENT

TESTIMONY FOR JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE

APRIL 10, 1997
WAUSAU, WISCONSIN
BY RICHARD SICCHIO

MY NAME IS RICHARD SICCHIO AND I AM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE NORTHERN AREA AGENCY ON AGING LOCATED IN RHINELANDER, WISCONSIN. THE NORTHERN REGION INCLUDES 17 COUNTIES AND SIX TRIBAL AREAS IN NORTHERN WISCONSIN AND APPROXIMATELY 100,000 OLDER PEOPLE RESIDE HERE. IN THE INTEREST OF TIME MY REMARKS WILL BE BRIEF AND I HAVE PROVIDED YOU WITH A TYPED COPY. I THANK YOU FOR THIS OPPORTUNITY TO ADDRESS THE COMMITTEE.

MY MAIN CONCERN ABOUT THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET IS IN THE AREA OF LONG TERM CARE. ONCE AGAIN THE BUDGET HE PROPOSED REFLECTS THE CONTINUED INSTITUTIONAL BIAS THAT RANKS WISCONSIN 9th IN THE NATION IN TERMS OF HOW MANY PERSONS PER CAPITA ARE RECEIVING LONG TERM CARE IN INSTITUTIONS. WHILE THE DEPARTMENT REQUESTED FUNDING FOR 2,500 ADDITIONAL COP SLOTS TO ADDRESS THE COP WAITING LIST WHICH IS NOW OVER 8,200 THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET RECOMMENDS FUNDING FOR ONLY 400 ADDITIONAL SLOTS.

AT THE SAME TIME, WHILE THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & FAMILY SERVICES REQUESTED ZERO INCREASES FOR MEDICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDERS, THE GOVERNOR'S BUDGET REQUESTS MODIFYING THE NURSING HOME FORMULA TO PROVIDE UP TO 6.1% INCREASE IN 1998 AND UP TO 3.5% IN 1999 WHICH COULD ADD UP TO \$132 MILLION OF STATE AND FEDERAL FUNDING.

WHAT AMAZES ME ABOUT ALL THIS IS THAT WISCONSIN'S COP PROGRAM HAS BEEN NATIONALLY AND INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED FOR SERVING LONG TERM CARE CLIENTS IN THEIR HOMES AND IN THE COMMUNITY.

A YEAR AGO LEGISLATION WAS PASSED THAT SAID THAT ANYONE WHOSE SERVICES AT HOME WERE HIGHER THAN THE AVERAGE COST OF NURSING HOME CARE SHOULD BE TRANSFERRED TO A NURSING HOME. WOULDN'T IT HAVE BEEN PRUDENT AT THAT TIME TO SAY CONVERSELY THAT ANYONE WHOSE SERVICES IN AN INSTITUTION WERE HIGHER THAN THE AVERAGE COST OF HOME CARE SHOULD BE TRANSFERRED TO THEIR HOME IF IT WAS POSSIBLE? WOULDN'T THAT HAVE BEEN GOOD SOCIAL POLICY? EVEN THOUGH THE CAP ON COMMUNITY CARE WAS NEVER IMPLEMENTED, IT WAS ANOTHER CLEAR EXAMPLE OF THE INSTITUTIONAL BIAS WE HAVE IN WISCONSIN.

THIS IS AN ENORMOUS ISSUE. THE AGE WAVE IS COMING. IF WE DON'T BEGIN NOW TO PREPARE FOR THE MASSIVE INCREASES IN OLDER PEOPLE CAUSED BY THE BABY BOOM AND INCREASES IN LONGEVITY, OUR SYSTEMS WILL COLLAPSE UNDER THE PRESSURE. UNLESS WE PLAN ON TURNING ALL OUR HIGH RISES INTO NURSING HOMES, WE WILL NOT EVEN COME CLOSE TO MEETING THE INCREASED NEEDS THE NEXT DECADES WILL BRING.

I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO TAKE A MINUTE TO VOICE MY SUPPORT FOR AN ELDER RIGHTS BILL FOR WISCONSIN. A BILL THAT WOULD PROVIDE ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR THE BENEFIT SPECIALIST PROGRAM INCLUDING THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A TRIBAL BENEFIT SPECIALIST PROGRAM; PROVIDE FUNDING FOR ELDER ABUSE DIRECT SERVICES; AND ADD TWO ADDITIONAL OMBUDSMAN TO THE BOARD ON AGING AND LONG TERM CARE. ALL FUNDING FOR THESE PROGRAMS WOULD COME FROM THE ELIMINATING THE SENIOR CITIZENS INCOME TAX CREDIT OF \$25.00 FOR COUPLES WITH ANNUAL INCOMES OVER \$40,000 AND INDIVIDUALS WITH AN INCOME OVER \$30,000.



University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

College of Letters & Science
Department of Mathematics & Computing

Stevens Point, WI 54481-3897 (715) 346-2120

**Testimony Before
the Joint Finance Committee
Wausau, Wisconsin
April 10, 1997**

**William Wresch
Chair
Department of Mathematics and Computing
UW-Stevens Point**

Hello. I am the local computer nerd, here to speak about the technology component of the University budget. My name is Bill Wresch and I head the computer major at UW-Stevens Point.

I know your time is limited, but I would like to briefly make three points about technology and the university.

First, part of this funding will go to help produce the computer experts needed by businesses here in Central Wisconsin. My program, for example, graduates 45 computer majors a year. They are all instantly hired at salaries ranging from 33,000 to 39,000 dollars year. Yet employers need more graduates than we can produce. If you ask any of the major employers here in the Wisconsin River Valley, they will all tell you the same thing -- they have trouble finding people who can run their networks, solve the Year 2000 problem, and help build the technologies upon which their enterprises depend. The Information Systems managers I talk with tell me they are finding only about half the computing professionals they need.

It is part of the University of Wisconsin's job to help provide those professionals, but it is not easy or cheap. UW-Stevens Point will spend \$100,000 this summer to build a network experimentation laboratory so every one of our computer grads can enter the workforce fully experienced in creating and maintaining computer networks.

Second, there are the other graduates of our university. Whether they are social work majors, accounting majors, or art majors, they all need to learn about the latest technology in their field. So they learn to use word processors, spreadsheets, databases, the Internet, and all the particular resources of their

profession. But teaching them these skills is not easy either. In any given semester, we have over 1000 students at UWSP taking one, two, or three credit courses in these areas. That requires computer facilities and instructors. Neither come cheap.

But if we don't provide this basic technology training for all our graduates, they will arrive at their first job unable to use the tools of their profession. They will not be work-ready when they graduate, and in fact we will be passing the expenses of their education onto their employers who will have to absorb the cost of their training. So we make the effort to provide as much computer training for all our majors as we can. The classes are full and the computer labs are full, and we are doing the best we can with what we have.

Third, there is our effort at outreach. I hope you have been told that UWSP is coordinating efforts with the Centers here at Wausau and Marshfield to provide four years of college right here in these cities. We are working on this project because we have surveyed residents of Central Wisconsin and know that there are large numbers of working adults who wish to upgrade their skills and complete a college degree. Yet because they are working during the day, they can't run down to Stevens Point to finish a degree. So we are going to bring the degree to them.

Our Regional Degree program will create a late afternoon and evening program for working adults. The first major we will offer is business. We will follow that up with a computing degree. This seems a perfect way to help both the employers of Central Wisconsin who are currently struggling with a shortage of skilled workers, while at the same time helping working adults who want to improve their employability. How are we going to do this? Much of it will require distance education strategies that will involve everything from new telecommunications links, to such old fashioned requirements as ensuring that there are enough books in the library here at the Wausau Center. But again, this effort will require money.

What would I like you to do to help us in these efforts? Two things. First, fund the technology initiative. I wish new technology was free, but it isn't. You know that and I know that. If we want technology available for our students and available to reach out to working Wisconsinites, we are going to have to pay for it.

Second, approve a reasonable raise for my faculty. I am going to lose one of my best professors next month. We were paying him \$40,000 per year. He was hired by the National Security Agency for \$65,000. I can't compete with that. Usually I don't have to. Our professors love teaching and research and will stay in the field even though they know they could be making far more money in industry. But we can't push them too far. A one percent raise last year, two

percent this year, pushes their family finances too hard. If you follow that up with anything less than 4% each of the next two years and they will all start thinking about a career change.

And if they start looking, they will find jobs. If they wish to keep teaching, all of the surrounding states are giving their faculty far more generous raises. If they choose to leave teaching, they can do even better. At some point, they will start thinking of what their families need, and I will have lost them. I can't run my program without professors. Please help me keep the ones I have.

So, what am I asking? Remember that we need technology to create the computing professionals Central Wisconsin employers are looking to hire, we also need technology to give all college students basic experience so they are job-ready upon graduation, and we need technology to reach out to working adults all over Central Wisconsin who wish to improve their skills. That will require funds for technology, and adequate compensation so we can put professors in the front of the room.

Thank You.

RAISING WISCONSIN'S TOBACCO EXCISE FEES:

**PROTECTING CHILDREN,
INCREASING REVENUE,
SAVING LIVES**



Center for Tobacco Research and Intervention
University of Wisconsin Medical School

CONCLUSION:

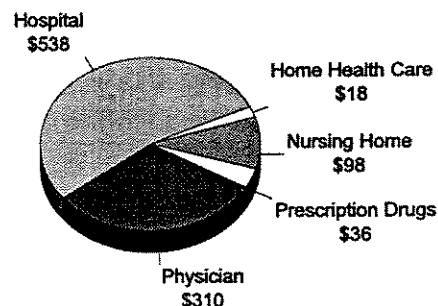
RAISING THE CIGARETTE EXCISE FEE BY AT LEAST 50¢ PER PACK WILL: (A) PROTECT CHILDREN FROM TOBACCO ADDICTION; (B) SAVE WISCONSIN RESIDENTS FROM THE PREVENTABLE ILLNESS AND PREMATURE DEATH THAT RESULTS FROM SMOKING; AND (C) INCREASE STATE REVENUE FOR TAX RELIEF AND OTHER CRITICAL NEEDS.

FACT: SMOKING IS A MAJOR ECONOMIC BURDEN ON THE CITIZENS OF WISCONSIN.

KEY FACTS:

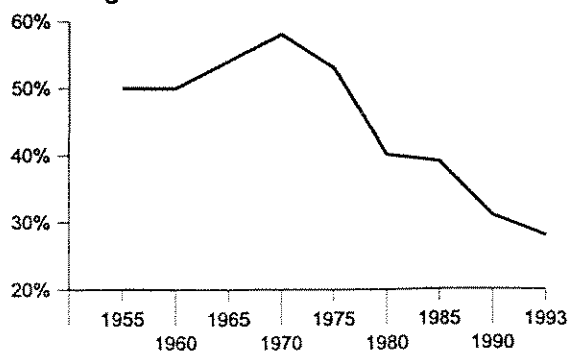
- ▶ Cigarette smoking costs Wisconsin more than \$1 billion in direct medical costs per year.¹
- ▶ In contrast, the current cigarette excise fee in Wisconsin only generates \$175 million per year.²
- ▶ Each smoker in our state spends, on average, \$800 per year for cigarettes.
- ▶ For states such as Wisconsin, reducing or eliminating tobacco use will increase employment in our state and improve health.³

Medical Costs (\$Millions), 1993



FACT: CIGARETTE EXCISE FEES IN WISCONSIN HAVE DECLINED IN REAL TERMS OVER THE LAST 40 YEARS.

Federal & State Fees on Pack of Cigarettes as Percent of Retail Price



KEY FACTS:

- ▶ Excise fee, measured as a percentage of the average retail price of cigarettes, has dropped from 56% to 28% over the last twenty years.
- ▶ Fourteen states have cigarette excise fees higher than Wisconsin's.

FACT: MOST WISCONSIN RESIDENTS WANT CIGARETTE EXCISE FEES INCREASED.

KEY FACTS:

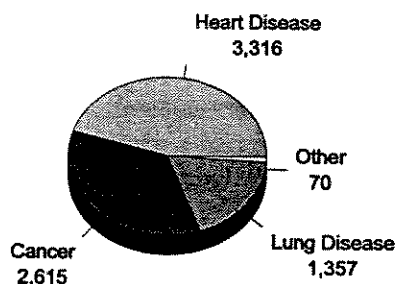
- ▶ 73% of Wisconsin residents support a \$1 per pack cigarette fee increase.⁴
- ▶ One-third of *smokers* support a \$1 per pack cigarette fee increase.

FACT: RAISING THE CIGARETTE EXCISE FEE WILL SAVE WISCONSIN LIVES.

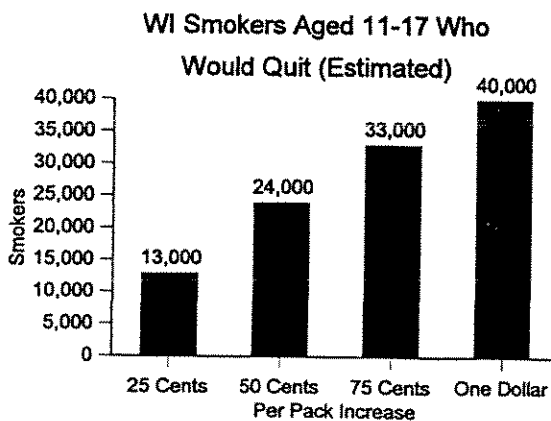
KEY FACTS:

- ▶ 7,400 Wisconsin residents die prematurely each year directly from tobacco use; that is, one out of every five deaths in our state is directly caused by smoking.
- ▶ Approximately 85,000 years of potential life are lost in our state each year because of premature deaths from tobacco.

WI Deaths Due to Smoking, 1993



FACT: INCREASING EXCISE FEES IS THE MOST POWERFUL WAY TO PROTECT CHILDREN FROM TOBACCO ADDICTION.



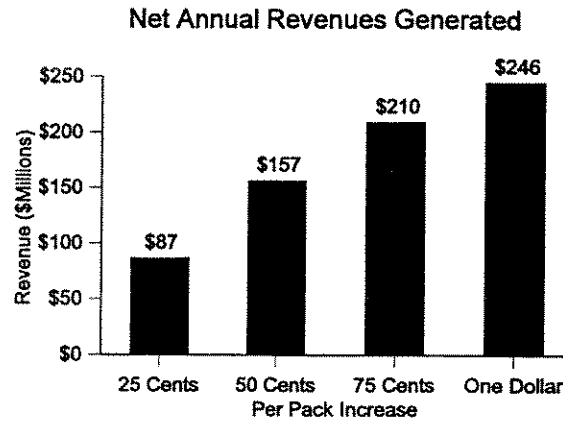
KEY FACTS:

- ▶ Each 10% increase in the real (after inflation) price of cigarettes leads to about a 10% reduction in tobacco use among teenagers.⁵
- ▶ Raising the cigarette excise fee by 50¢ per pack will result in 24,000 adolescents quitting smoking each year.
- ▶ Raising the cigarette excise fee by 50¢ per pack will discourage 50,000 adults from smoking each year.

FACT: RAISING CIGARETTE EXCISE FEES COULD BE AN IMPORTANT REVENUE SOURCE FOR PROPERTY TAX RELIEF.

KEY FACTS:

- ▶ Increasing the excise fee has two important benefits: it decreases smoking and its related costs, while increasing overall fee revenue.
- ▶ A 50¢ per pack increase will generate \$157 million per year.
- ▶ A \$1 per pack increase will generate \$246 million per year.
- ▶ If all of the new revenue from a \$1 excise fee increase went to property tax relief, each homeowner in Wisconsin would save \$200 each year.⁶



References

1. Van Gilder TJ, Remington PL: The health care burden of cigarettes on Wisconsin communities, 1994. Wisconsin Medical Journal, November, 1994.
2. Based on data for fiscal year ending June 30, 1994. Wisconsin Department of Revenue.
3. Warner KE, Fulton GA: The economic implications of tobacco product sales in a nontobacco state. JAMA, 1994;271:771-776.
4. The Wisconsin Survey, March, 1993. St. Norbert's College Survey Center, De Pere, WI 54115.
5. Ferrence R, et al: Effects of pricing on cigarette use among teenagers and adults in Canada, 1980-1989. Addiction Research Foundation, Toronto, February, 1991.
6. Based on 1.2 million homeowners receiving the property tax credit in 1994. Wisconsin Legislative Fiscal Bureau.

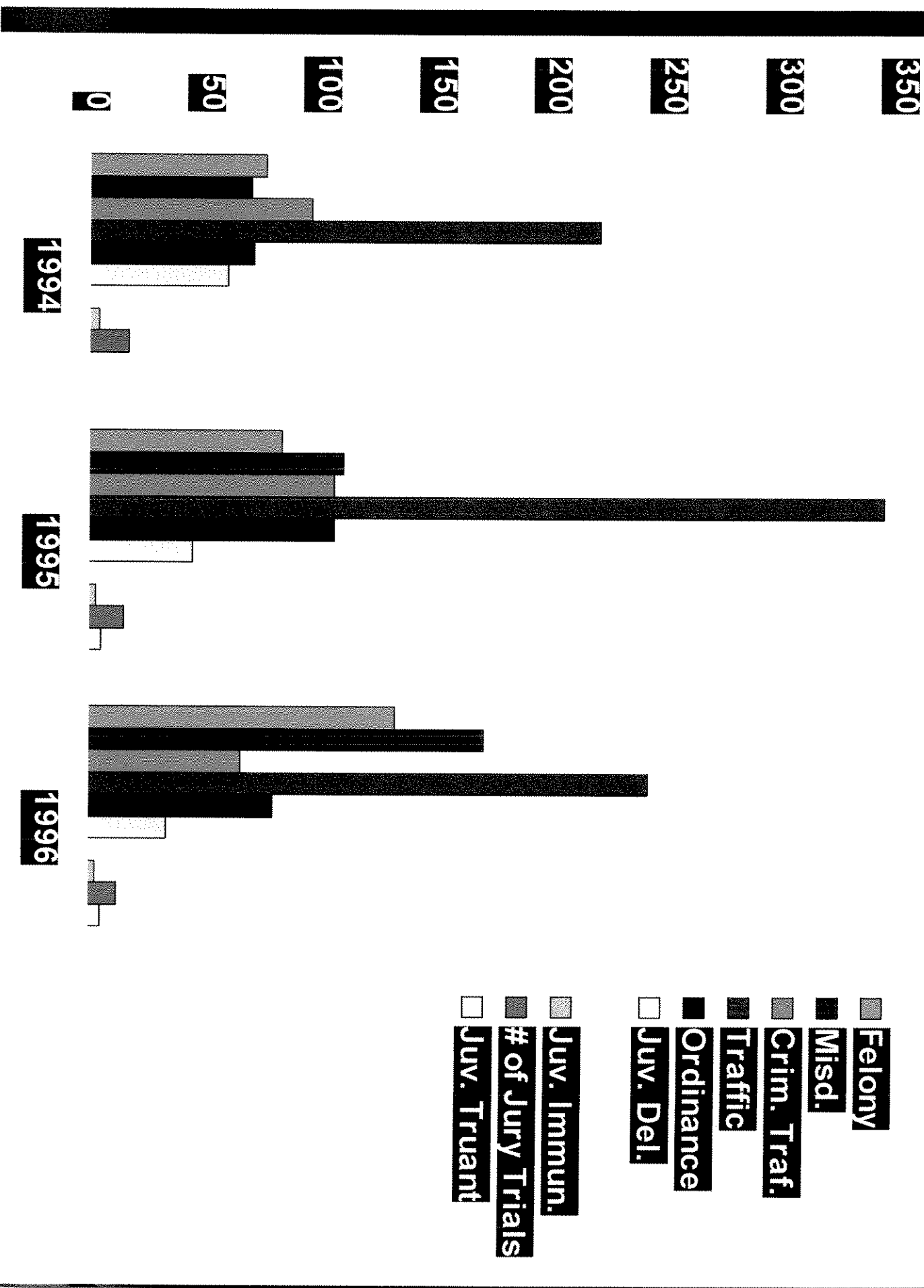
The Center for Tobacco Research and Intervention would like to thank Michael Hartman, Eric Stecker, and Scott Woller who assisted on this project.

CENTER FOR TOBACCO RESEARCH AND INTERVENTION

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN MEDICAL SCHOOL

7275 Medical Sciences Center 1300 University Avenue Madison, WI 53706
TEL: (608) 262-8673 FAX: (608) 265-3102

TAYLOR COUNTY DISTRICT ATTORNEY WORKLOAD DATA - CASES PROSECUTED



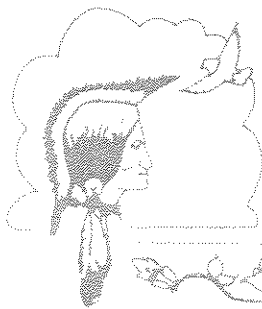
Taylor County D.A. Workload Data - Cases Prosecuted

Year	Felony	Misd.	Crim. Traffic	Traffic	Ordin.	Juvenile Delinq.	Juvenile Truants/ Immuns	# of Jury Trials
1994	76	70	96	221	71	60	0/4	17
1995	83	110	106	344	106	45	5/3	15
1996	133	171	66	242	80	34	5/3	12
Totals	292	351	268	807	257	139	10/10	44

Lab Time Allowed for 1994 = 1.065

Lab Time Allowed for 1995 = 1.035

Lab Time Allowed for 1996 = 1.407



Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College

Route 2, Box 2357, Hayward, WI 54843-9419

Phone 715/634-4790
Fax 715/634-5049



April 9, 1997

Dear Members Joint Committee on Finance:

I send greetings on behalf of President Minhas, Faculty, Staff and Students from the Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College which is located near Hayward, Wisconsin.

Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College and the College of Menominee Nation, the only two Tribal Community Colleges in the State of Wisconsin, seek your support to provide financial assistance to meet the unmet need of non-Indian students matriculating at both tribal colleges.

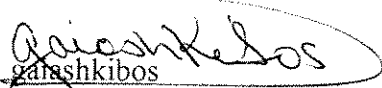
Base funding is provided to both tribal colleges through appropriations by the U.S. Congress administered by the Bureau of Indian Affairs. Each college receives approximately three thousand dollars (3,000) FTE per Native American Student - no dollars are appropriated for non-Indian students. In addition, each college does charge tuition for all students. Both colleges actively seeks foundation dollars and financial support from other sources. This however, is not enough to meet the increasing enrollment of non-Indian students.

Both Lac Courte Oreilles and Menominee College initially requested fifty one hundred dollars (5,100) FTE for non-Indian students and we have since revised our request to the State of Wisconsin to provide the minimum dollar amount that we presently receive from the BIA, that is three thousand dollars (3,000) FTE.

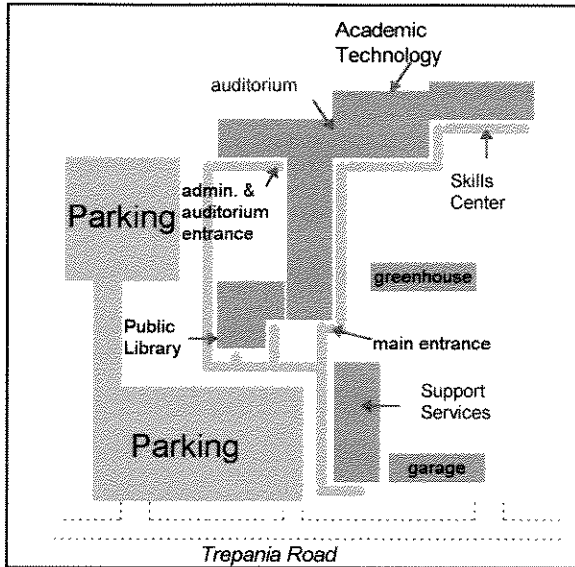
Lac Courte Oreilles 1995-96	100 (non-Indian Students) x 3,000 = 300,000
Menominee Nation College 1995-96	88 (non-Indian Students) x 3,000 = 264,000

Total request from the State of Wisconsin is \$564,000 for both Tribal Community Colleges to provide quality education for all students in the State of Wisconsin. Thank you for your consideration.

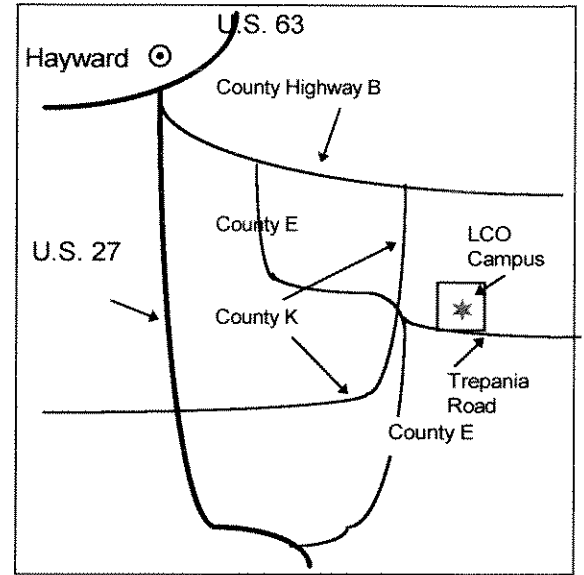
Sincerely,


Garashkibos
Vice President

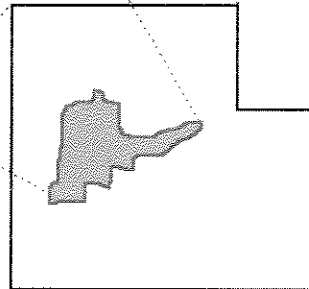
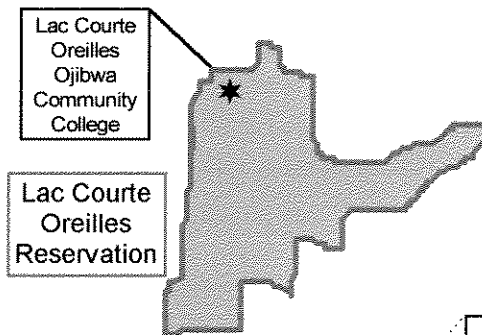
Lac Courte Oreilles Ojibwa Community College



LCOOCC Campus



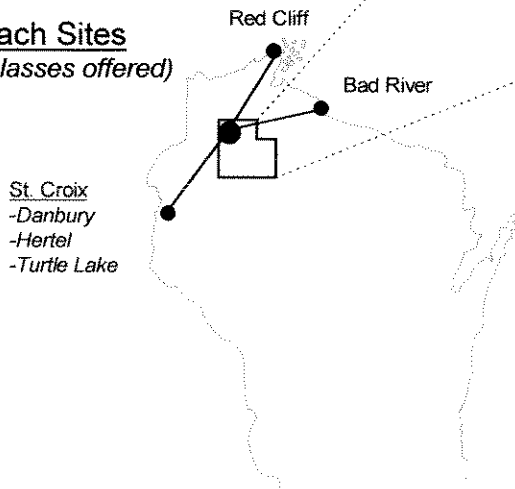
**For additional information please
call LCOOCC at 715 - 634 - 4790.**



**Sawyer
County**

Out-reach Sites

(same classes offered)



The Great State of Wisconsin



Statement to Joint Finance Committee

Ann T. Bolz
Director, Administrative Services
Community Health Care, Inc.
Wausau, Wisconsin
April 10, 1997

I'd like to thank the members of the Joint Finance Committee for traveling to Wausau to receive testimony on the 1997- 1999 State Biennial Budget.

Community Health Care, Inc. is the parent company of Wausau Hospital, Visiting Nurse Association, Wausau Regional Health Care, Northwoods Hospital, Pine Ridge Medical Equipment and Center Buildings, Inc. Our purpose is to provide a complete continuum of health care services to the residents of North and Central Wisconsin. Our objectives include providing residents the appropriate care, at the right time, the right place and at the right cost. We provide services locally, and have providers in 14 counties in Wisconsin and three in Michigan.

The Budget bill contains a provision to shore up the finances of the HIRSP plan by further reducing payments to providers who provide care to HIRSP enrollees. As you know, individuals who are eligible for coverage through the HIRSP plan have been deemed "uninsurable" in the private insurance market, and the HIRSP Plan serves as a residual market for these individuals. The plan is currently funded with a combination of premiums, state subsidy, provider discounts (providers are currently reimbursed at a discounted rate of 70-80% of their costs) and insurance industry assessments. While the majority of the private insurance market, and government funded insurance markets, such as Medicaid and Medicare, have begun to embrace managed care as a strategy to reduce costs and improve access and quality of care, the HIRSP program stands out as a program that seeks to shore up finances by adding more money and ignoring managed care strategies.

The proposal before you, if sustained, will reimburse HIRSP providers at the Medicaid rate which is currently at 55% for inpatient hospitals and 44% for out patient care., resulting in a cut of \$10.5 million. This \$10.5 million cut is added to the \$7million currently contributed through the provider discounts. Physicians will face a reduction from 72% of charges to 38% of charges, resulting in a \$8 million reduction.

What is particularly onerous about this HIRSP budget balancing, is that it is accomplished by a hidden tax on providers. HIRSP beneficiaries get no relief from their high premiums, and certainly no incentives or benefits that are derived from implementation of managed care strategies. It leaves in place an expensive, fragmented health services reimbursement scheme which is certainly out of step with other state initiatives directed at improving access to care and quality of services to the states vulnerable populations.

Testimony
Ann T. Bolz
April 10, 1997

We agree the HIRSP program needs refocusing and reevaluation. We also agree that providers need to be a part of the evaluation with the outcome to develop a health insurance system for HIRSP enrollees that manages both their costs and their care. Last session the legislature asked OCI and DHFS to develop detailed recommendations to do just that. This response of provider payment reductions is neither refocusing the plan nor is the result of reevaluation of the total plan. It is a quick fix, a hidden tax, and serves only to mislead the beneficiaries, the taxpayers and the providers.

We suggest this committee reject this funding proposal and set in motion a productive and budget balancing revision of the HIRSP plan that is consistent with other state directed health plans.

I thank you for your time.



April 8, 1997

Joint Finance Committee
State of Wisconsin

Gentlemen:

My name is Tony Yeager, and I live in Rhinelander, Wi.
I have some concerns regarding Alzheimers Disease, pertaining to the treatment,
and research done on its behalf to find some preventative way to restrain or stop
the onset of this disease.

You may or may not be aware of the large number of people afflicted with Alzheimers.
At the present time almost 60% of the people in nursing homes have this disease.
I do not have the number of these who are being paid for by Medicaid, but the cost
at approximately \$3000.00 per month is very, very great.

I am asking you to consider allocating a sum of money strictly for research so
we can bring this disease under control or at least restrict it. Perhaps to start
with several million dollars?

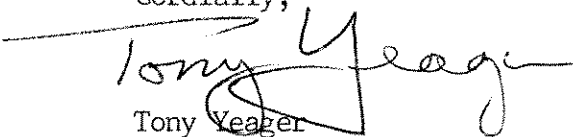
Many years ago the scourge of Polio haunted everyone but with the advent of the
Saulk vaccine it has practically been eliminated.

In Wisconsin we are fortunate to have the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation
who through their efforts created the drug WARFRIN. As you know this is used
for controlling rats and mice, but it also is less known for the useage in
prescription drugs such as Coumadin, which is a blood thinner and used by
those people with heart conditions and high blood pressure. The foundation
has generated thousands of dollars as a result of their patents.

My suggestion, is, let us allocate some money and perhaps have the Wisconsin
Alumni Foundation work on the Alzheimer research and hopefully the State of
Wisconsin, will not only help restrain or prevent the disease but could also
create a source of income and reduce the expenditures through Medicaid.

Thank you, for your time and consideration, as chairperson of the Publicy
Policy committee, I am speaking for the more than 6000 persons in our area
diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease.

Cordially,



Tony Yeager
3 Edgewater Homes
Rhinelander, WI.
54501

cc: Senator, Roger Breske
Representative Joe Handrick

North Central Wisconsin Chapter 903 N. 2nd Street Wausau, WI 54403
(715) 848-1221 1-800-200-1221

April 10, 1997

Testimony of Karen Kolpien for review by the Joint Finance Committee.

Topic: Increase the cigarette excise tax.

I urge you, the members of the Joint Finance Committee to increase the cigarette excise tax.

The sole reason for increasing the cigarette tax should be to deter young persons from starting to smoke.

In states such as Massachusetts and California it has been documented that an increase in the cigarette tax results in fewer young people starting to smoke.

The Tobacco-Free coalitions of Portage and Wood counties have collected over 700 signatures that support a cigarette tax increase of an additional 56 cents. This is a tax that is popular with parents, teachers, and community members because no one wants to see their child smoke.

In my involvement in tobacco prevention and education, I have witnessed the ever increasing number of kids that smoke. Education is not the answer, we are presently educating and yet we see the numbers of youth smoking rise at an alarming rate. Over the past five years (1991 - 1996) smoking has risen by 50% among 8th graders (from 14% to 21%) and 10th graders (from 21% to 30%). Smoking by 12th graders is up 20% during this same period (from 28% to 34%). In Wisconsin, in 1996, 37% of kids in grades 9-12 were identified as current smokers. We need a new answer, an answer that will work.

Raising the cigarette tax is an answer to assist in the problem. Other states are successfully benefitting from an increased cigarette tax. I urge you to let our Wisconsin kids benefit as well. Help kids to never start to smoke.

Testimony Submitted to the Joint Finance Committee -
Thursday, April 10, 1997, at U.W. Marathon Campus University
Theatre, Room 133, 518 South 7th Avenue, Wausau, Wisconsin.

Honorable Members of the Joint Finance Committee:

I am Nora Zientkowski of Tomahawk, Wisconsin, and I am submitting testimony on behalf of the thousands of Alzheimer's victims and their care givers, including myself and my husband, Raymond, who was diagnosed with Alzheimer's Disease in 1992.

Legislature in and of itself is an innate body of government without the ability to act, speak, love or hate - it cannot distinguish right from wrong, fairness from injustice, has no soul, lacks the ability to make justifiable decisions, or to reason (just like persons with Alzheimer's Disease) it cannot hear the marchers who march to the beat of the drum to Federal and State Capitols, or to the lone voice of the victim of Alzheimer's Disease.

That is why I am appealing to you, the persons functioning within the innate body of legislative government who are endowed with all of the above attributes to make decisions which are of most benefit to humanity.

I am quoting Si Frumkin, a freelance writer from Studio City, California, whose commentary appeared in The Chicago Tribune, Tuesday, February 11, 1997 (copy attached):

"What if it was called AIDSHEIMERS?

The unfairness of the overwhelming concern for AIDS and the lukewarm interest for Diseases like Alzheimer's is even more striking when one considers that AIDS is unique in that it is almost 100% preventable."

Si Frumkin is echoing my words that I have been vocalizing and writing to anyone and everyone who is in a position to hear, listen, and read for the past two years, and in a position to end discrimination against victims of Alzheimer's Disease and their loved ones.

Our time is long overdue by government and many health care providers in recognizing our NEEDS and addressing our concerns. We have contributed all of our lives to the advancement of government and society as a whole.

It is high time that we, who are NOT ORGANIZED, make our voices and our needs heard and be recognized as a segment of Society with SPECIAL needs.

Testimony to Finance Committee
Page Two

A lot more has to be done in Alzheimer's Research, Training, Information and Education (TIES) in order to improve the Quality of Life for both the Alzheimer's patient and family care givers - all of these need funding dollars.

Health care providers are slow in responding to Alzheimer's patient needs. There is a lack of training of paid health care professional care givers. As a result, ethical and moral implications regarding the delivery of health care services is in question. Is this a result of poor legislation?

President Clinton added insult to injury when he requested Medicare payment for 32 hours of respite care a YEAR for the beneficiaries of Alzheimer's Disease in the 1998 Budget package which he submitted to Congress. Would you cheer this miniscule crumb as a Presidential gift if YOU were a 36 hour a day care giver in every 24 hours in YOUR DAY? I know you would NOT.

I implore you to look at the needs associated with Alzheimer's Disease and make decisions of conscience, justice and fairness to Alzheimer's victims who have so far been sorely ignored and discriminated against by too many segments of government and society.

I would appreciate knowing you will include adequate funding for Alzheimer's programs in the 1998 budget.

Sincerely,
Nora Zientkowski *Nora Zientkowski*
Taxpayer and Caregiver
Member of North Central
Chapter Alzheimer's
Association of Wisconsin
W4784 Highway A
Tomahawk, WI 54487

P.S. Judith Durkee, Executive Director of seven counties of the North Central Wisconsin Chapter of Alzheimer's Association, is the only paid staffer in her office. Her salary is paid by a grant from the Helen Bader Foundation. No government funding here. The office is functioning with very dedicated volunteers who are themselves very busy and very tired care givers. Could you do as well in your Legislative Offices with volunteer help?

WE NEED YOUR HELP - Thank you.

*cc: Alzheimer's Assoc.
Chicago & Wash. D.C.*

Commentary

The unfairness of the overwhelming concern for AIDS and the lukewarm interest for diseases like Alzheimer's is even more striking when one considers that AIDS is unique in that it is almost 100 percent preventable.

What if it was called Aidshzheimer's?

By Si Frumkin

My mother had Alzheimer's disease for six years before she died and so I have a special fear that affects me when I forget a face, a name, anything. "Is this it?" I think to myself, "is it happening to me?" I watched a bright, happy, efficient, talented, beautiful woman become a stolid, passive, unsmiling infant. At first she just seemed to have lapses of memory. She would say things that had no relation to what she had been talking about a moment ago, she'd respond to questions that weren't asked, she'd smile and nod her head and I'd know that she didn't understand what was being said. After a while she couldn't write anymore, then she couldn't speak coherently, just baby talk and noises with a word here and there. Finally, she recognized no one, regressed into her own world that was somewhere behind her empty eyes and spent her days and nights in a chair, a bed, docile, wherever she was led and placed, fed and diapered, never asking for anything, an unhappy infant in an adult body, her mind and soul gone. Once in a while she would cry. We never knew why.

And so I have a special fear that haunts me whenever I forget something. I tell myself that it's the normal aging process, that it happens to everyone, that I was always very bad at remembering faces and names, and yet, the fear is there. I am at more risk than those who didn't have a history of this unspeakable horror in their families but there is nothing I can do about it. I make bad jokes about leaving instructions to contact Dr. Jack Kevorkian if "it" happens to me, but I am not really joking. I wouldn't want to live speechless, mindless, an infant in diapers, without dignity, without a mind.

Alzheimer's is a nightmare. It destroys the mind. It erases the individual. It strikes indiscriminately and there is no warning, no prevention, no cure. It is almost an epidemic—the number of people with Alzheimer's is expected to reach 15 million during the next 25 years. It strikes 7 percent of people older than 65 and 40 percent of those older than 80. Yet

dedicated and concerned individuals who will probably never get AIDS, but many of whom will be struck by Alzheimer's. Mass marches against AIDS draw tens of thousands. TV screens show demonstrations at the White House demanding government action. The budget cuts last summer never touched any of the funds linked to AIDS.

The unfairness of the overwhelming concern for AIDS and the lukewarm interest for diseases like Alzheimer's is even more striking when one considers that AIDS is unique in that it is almost 100 percent preventable. I am sure that any prospective Alzheimer's sufferer would gladly wear a sheath over any part of his or her body to avoid getting it. I would.

A recent news item tells of a new experimental drug that has been shown to drastically improve human memory. It was invented at the University of California at Irvine—an ampikine compound trade marked as a pill under the name Ampalex. It has been tested successfully and will be tested some more next year. After that there will be more tests, followed by the usual long approval process and, who knows, it might even be available in 5 or 10 years. Can you imagine a drug that had similar results in treating AIDS that would be withheld from the public for 10 years? I can't. There would be demonstrations, riots, hearings. There would be action—quick and immediate. There would be everything that isn't happening with diseases that affect many times as many lives as AIDS, that are not preventable, and strike at random regardless of the life-style of the victim.

I wish the AIDS victims well. I admire and envy the gay community their political clout. They have defended their own and convinced America that AIDS imperils us all. I can only wish—in vain—that we, the rest of us, had the resources and abilities to market the tragedy of Alzheimer's half as effectively.

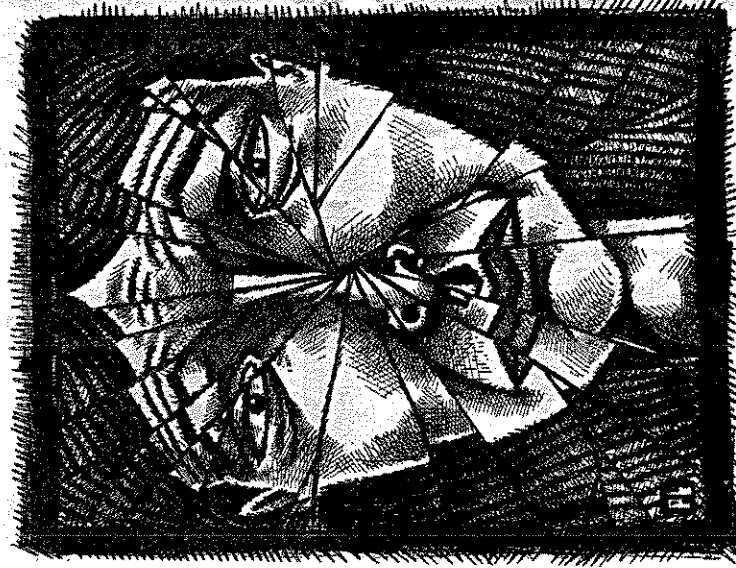


Illustration by Paul Lachine

there is no urgency about this scourge, no marches, no ribbons to be worn at public events, no demonstrations protesting government neglect, no movie stars leading crusades and raising millions to cure, help, nurture, comfort the victims.

I envy the cohesion and political power of the gay community. They speak with a unified voice that makes politicians sit up and listen. AIDS has become the sacred cow of diseases. Everyone is aware of it—it has become a movement, a cause, a sacred mission for countless hundreds of thousands

Si Frumkin is a free-lance writer from Studio City, Calif.

To Senator W.B. Jensen
Here is the CPM you
requested. Win

Senators and Representatives of the Joint Finance Committee:

Thank you for allowing us the time to share our feelings with you regarding the W-2 proposals and the impact it will have on the Wausau community.

I am Father Woody Pace and this is Win Spencer and we are here to represent the Church of St Anne, Wausau.

We are especially concerned about what the consequences of the federal welfare law will have on the legal immigrants who have been in the US for more than five years and will now be denied SSI and Food Stamp benefits because they are not citizens. Our parish has a membership of 87 Hmong families. We share the concerns of the 22 families who will experience loss of income when their SSI or Food Stamps are cut.

Our interest is not only our parish members, but all of the refugees and immigrants who are either elderly or disabled, or striving for self-sufficiency in this country. We are encouraged by the number who have already become citizens, and those who have become gainfully employed or have started their own business. However, there are many who are not citizens because they are not yet ready to take the exam, and there will be many who never will become citizens because of low language skills and inability for

further education. These are the people of whom we speak. Furthermore, the benefit provisions are unjust. For example, according to a recent study by the Urban Institute, immigrants pay \$30 billion more in taxes to the government at all levels than they receive in benefits. Immigrants will be required to pay taxes to federal, state and local governments, but they will not be able to make use of many of the programs that their tax dollars are financing. We have every reason to trust that the younger generation will become educated, employed and more productive, but for now we have a real problem that needs to be addressed at this time.

The money from SSI and their Food Stamps are the only source of income for these people. The loss of SSI also denies them Medicaid or Medical Assistance. Our experience with the Southeast Asian people has shown us that they will do everything in their power to help their family members meet this crisis. However, there are also a number of families who will not have siblings they can turn to and they live in constant fear of the future. We know that when

Page 3 - Church of St Anne

we refer to SSI and Food Stamps we are speaking of federal programs that you have no jurisdiction over. Still the State does have recourse to aid programs. We suggest the following:

1. Continue the availability of Medical Assistance to immigrants and refugees.
2. Enact State programs to provide benefits for food, shelter and clothing to immigrants who are no longer eligible to federal assistance.
3. Restore the reduction to Community Aids, the State program benefiting the poor.
4. Redefine grants for Community Service Jobs and Transitional Placement as wages, so the people in those jobs may become eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit.

Our parish has been an active participant in the Wausau 2000 program, a volunteer group of citizens that is trying to address these needs when they no longer qualify and their financial source is discontinued. We are willing to do our share to help these refugees and other welfare recipients, but this will be a very large financial impact and our resources are limited.

If Medical Assistance can be continued it would help the many families who will have to face the income loss. They in no way have the means to take on the health care expenses for elderly or disabled family members.

Please keep these people in mind when you present the budget for passage. These refugees are in this country because our government brought them here for their safety. Because immigration is a much

Page 4 - Church of St Anne

larger issue for the federal government, and our hope to solve their dilemma at that level will take more time, we believe that Wisconsin citizens have an obligation through our state government to see that these people who were willing to sacrifice for us during the Vietnam War are not thrown aside at their time of need.



Wisconsin Council 40

AFSCME, AFL-CIO

8033 Excelsior Drive, Suite B
Madison, Wisconsin 53717-1903
Phone: 608 836-4040
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Michael Murphy
President
Robert W. Lyons
Executive Director

DATE: April 10, 1997
TO: Members of the Joint Finance Committee
FROM: Cal Christianson, Executive Board Member, District #6
RE: Transportation Funding

Thank you for this opportunity to communicate our concerns about transportation funding to the Joint Finance Committee.

AFSCME Council 40 has 29,000 members who work for local units of government and private sector non-profit agencies throughout Wisconsin, excluding Milwaukee County. Our members see the need for additional funding to improve our transportation infrastructure from an economic development perspective. In addition, thousands of our members are county highway department and municipal street department workers who on a daily basis have a first-hand view of the need to invest in our state's transportation system.

For several years now, the state share of funding for local highway and street maintenance has been decreasing as a percentage of total costs. As a result, local government faces a situation where the highway costs of the future could increasingly shift over to the property tax. This could displace funding for other important public sector programs and anger local taxpayers who would unfairly bear the burdens of road programs.

We believe that Wisconsin's road network is a statewide economic development and jobs network that is a statewide responsibility. Manufacturing, services, tourism, agriculture, and forestry all depend on a healthy road network. Investing in this network is a prudent economic development decision.

We applaud the proposal for a three cent (3¢) increase in the gas tax and a ten dollar (\$10.00) increase in the annual motor vehicle registration fee recently advanced by the Transportation Development Association of Wisconsin (TDA). While we would not close the door on other possible funding options, the adoption of the TDA proposal would go a long way toward meeting our documented transportation needs. We ask the committee to keep an open mind on all revenue options that could fund needed transportation projects and provide higher levels of transportation aids to local units of government.



in the public service



Members of the Joint Finance Committee

April 10, 1997

Page 2

I would also ask the committee to make one specific modification to the budget that will have a negative impact on many of our members. Section 4137 of the budget (p. 1650) appears to shift the liability for motor vehicle accidents resulting from the operation of a snowplow from the governmental unit to the individual snowplow operator. This may be an unintended consequence of the desire to limit the liability of governmental units arising out of such accidents, which we support. Snowplow operators, however, have enough to worry about in the course of doing their jobs, and should not be subjected to lawsuits for accidents that occur during the course of snow removal operations. We respectfully request that section 4137 be deleted from the budget.

Again, thank you for the opportunity to present our concerns.

CC/mmb

Budget Hearing 4/10/97

My name is Melanie Kirsch. I am the executive director of the Northwoods Alliance, an alliance of lake associations, hunting and fishing groups, environmental groups with more than 3000 members. I own my own commercial agency in the advertising industry and am the author of How to Get Off the Fast Track and Live a Life Money Can't Buy, a massmarket paperback that features Wisconsin as a premier vacation and retirement community.

I am concerned about Governor Thompson's language in the budget regarding mining. It is clearly out of place in the budget and appears to divert attention from the mining moratorium bill. According to the Governor's language, before a permit to mine is granted, the operators of a proposed mine would have to show that a mine will use "proven technology". Under the Governor's proposal, technology that has never been used in a mine could be used to satisfy the "proven technology" requirement, even technology that has only been used in factories or another non-mining situation. The Governor's language would not require any proof that the technology in question has actually worked successfully in a mine of any sort, much less a sulfide metallic mine such as Exxon's proposed Wolf River mine. It also has no requirement that a mining operator prove by example that the technology has worked over a period of time. In contrast, the mining moratorium bill would require a specific example of a metallic, sulfide ore mine that has been operated and reclaimed for 10 years without pollution. The mining moratorium bill has overwhelming public support. Remove this "proven technology" language from the budget because it is vague and meaningless. Allow the mining moratorium bill to pass in the assembly and focus instead on helping to preserve our strong and sustainable Northwoods economy that welcomes environmentally responsible soft industry. Don't betray our priceless beautiful Northwoods. Stop prostituting yourself by selling us off as a mining district.



Northwoods Alliance Vision Statement

Northcentral Wisconsin is a remarkable, beautiful region of sparkling rivers, bountiful lakes and untamed wildlife. Many people from around the Midwest and the nation travel here to enjoy the unique aesthetic, cultural and ecological features that make up the "Northwoods" experience. Although the Northwoods has changed dramatically since European settlement, its ecological integrity still captures the imagination of the casual visitor or long-time resident.

Unfortunately, past and present environmentally degrading activities threaten the ecological integrity that is the basis for the area's natural beauty and a sustainable economy. Plans for more roads, highways and excessive clearcutting of our recovering forests are fragmenting the landscape and depleting habitat for many species of animals and plants such as white cedar and yellow lady slipper. Mercury contamination of lakes and rivers is growing and the permitting of metallic sulfide mines poses a source of toxic pollutants for centuries to come.

In response to these threats, we need a well-informed citizenry committed to fostering a mutually beneficial relationship between local communities and the land. In this spirit, the Northwoods Alliance is formed. Seven local environmental groups have formed in Northcentral Wisconsin since 1992. These groups are run almost exclusively by volunteers and work with shoe-string budgets.

Mission and Goals

The mission of the Northwoods Alliance is to work together as a federation of organizations to protect, restore and enhance the natural ecosystems of northcentral Wisconsin whereby the beauty, integrity and productivity of our lakes, rivers and forests are maintained in perpetuity. To realize this mission, we have identified the following goals:

- 1) To protect water quality and make sure all regional Outstanding Resource Waters, such as the Willow Flowage, receive protection against point-source pollution discharges, as recommended by the DNR staff and supported by a large majority of the public.
- 2) To encourage shared decision-making authority between natural resource agencies and the public for projects that have important ecological and economic impacts.
- 3) To maintain and enhance the native flora and fauna of the region.
- 4) To achieve an ecologically sustainable local economy based primarily upon the sustainable use of renewable resources.
- 5) To achieve a moratorium on metallic sulfide mining in northern Wisconsin until mining technology can unequivocally demonstrate the ability to prevent pollution. To support reuse, recycling and conservation in order to replace the demand for new sources of metals.
- 6) To uphold and respect the unique contributions that diverse interests and cultures provide to our local communities.
- 7) To educate the public and elected officials about threats to the environment and recommend solutions.

THE NORTHWOODS ALLIANCE MMB STATEMENT

MARCH 11, 1997

The Northwoods Alliance is a North Central Wisconsin Alliance of lake associations, hunting and fishing groups, tribal interests and concerned citizens united in our support of a mining moratorium until we are guaranteed Exxon and the mining industry won't contaminate our clean water.

It's all about the little people in little places like Rhinelander and Tomahawk, Wisconsin.

This is a coalition of diverse interests coming together on this issue from an economic and environmental perspective.

Exxon and the mining industry threaten our sustainable economy which is based on renewable resources. We don't want our fish contaminated with mercury. We don't want our groundwater polluted. We don't want to risk toxic spills of truckloads of cyanide. We don't want decades of acid drainage into our wetlands. We don't want boom and bust economies when we already have a thriving sustainable economy that welcomes soft industry.

A big concern of ours is mercury. CMC own pilot study estimates mercury in the pipeline discharge to be 20 times the current water quality based effluent limit. We already have fish advisories on the Wisconsin River because of severe mercury contamination. Mercury bioaccumulates. It does not go away. After years of cleaning up the river, why on earth do we now want to increase contamination?

We are concerned that if Exxon is allowed to dump minewaste from outside Oneida County into the Wisconsin River, it may prohibit future expansion of local industry and Rhinelander municipality which may need future allocation in a river currently fully allocated and rated HIGH for standards violations and impairments.

The Northwoods Alliance is co-hosting a Citizens Mining Forum Wednesday, March 12, 7 to 9pm at the James William Junior High School in Rhinelander.



University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point

Office of the Chancellor

Stevens Point, WI 54481-3897 (715) 346-2123 FAX (715) 346-2561

<http://www.uwsp.edu/admin/chancell>

email: tgeorge@uwsp.edu

**Written Testimony of Thomas F. George
Chancellor
University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point
for the
Joint Finance Committee
Wisconsin Legislature**

April 10, 1997
UW/Marathon Center

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, I am honored to have the opportunity to submit written testimony on behalf of the students, staff, and faculty at the University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point. As chancellor of UWSP, I wish to relay the overall importance of the Governor's proposed 1997-99 biennial budget for the UW System. UWSP supports the proposed budget, and we view Governor Thompson's budget as a positive step forward. In addition, we encourage both the Governor and the Legislature to work together to find additional resources on behalf of higher education.

My comments today will focus solely on flexibility issues impacting UWSP and the UW System. Flexibility issues of most concern to UWSP pertain to the retention and hiring of quality staff and faculty, as well as keeping this and future budgets targeted toward student success. William Wresch, chair of UWSP's Math/Computer Science department, who will also be testifying today, will focus his remarks on the need for increased state support for technology throughout the UW System.

Today I want to urge the Committee to support the Board of Regents' proposed four percent salary increase per year during the '97-'99 biennium. At first glance this appears self-serving, but in reality, there is unanimity among students, faculty, and staff alike that retaining and hiring the best staff and faculty available will go a long way in assuring the UW System's world renowned quality and excellence into the 21st Century.

A recent faculty loss at UWSP poignantly shows that UW System salary scales are no longer keeping pace with our peers. A mathematics/computing professor was, in essence, made an offer he could not refuse. A salary 50 percent greater than his current salary at UWSP could not be matched, and hence his resignation this past March. What is even more revealing and disconcerting is that his hire was in the public sector (federal agency) and not in the private sector. Legislators need to know that competition for UW System faculty and staff is coming from both the public and private sectors.

The good news is that if we act now, we can stop the loss of our top faculty and staff. With a projected 20-25 percent of faculty slated for retirement over the next few years, it is paramount that our Legislature take whatever steps are necessary to assure top quality staff and faculty throughout the UW System.

Granted, there are varying opinions on how to raise salaries within the System. But there is no disagreement between the concerned parties. Students, staff, and faculty all realize that salary competitiveness needs addressing now. UWSP would prefer that the Regents' proposed four percent per year salary increase come from general revenue monies. This is our first and most desired path to raising salaries to a competitive level. I am confident that the Legislature will find the political will and the means to take this desired course of action. If for unforeseen reasons general revenue monies cannot be found, then I would urge the Legislature to give the UWSP and the UW System the flexibility needed to meet this challenge. The Governor's proposed 105 percent tuition spending authority, as a measure of last resort, can make up the difference and in the short term, solve this dilemma.

I fully understand the arguments of keeping tuition costs down and this institution is doing all that it can to do so. One possible remedy to offset student tuition increases would be to expand WHEG grants. Preferably, the Legislature should combine increased general revenue monies, or give the Regents 105 percent tuition spending authority, while raising WHEG grants and their availability for students System-wide.

The University of Wisconsin-Stevens Point is the only four-year campus for thousands of students across many parts of central and northern Wisconsin. Our mission remains to give all students access to a quality learning experience while keeping tuition costs affordable.

For more than 100 years Wisconsin's Legislature has never wavered from the challenge to bring accessible, affordable, quality higher education to its citizens. But legislators, and all who work within the UW System, ought not be satisfied with past laurels. Wisconsin's higher education tradition is a solid foundation that requires constant maintenance and nurturing. However, in recent years Wisconsin's higher education needs have not been fully met. Surrounding states have been increasing public support for higher education while Wisconsin has actually cut its commitment to higher education. While fully understanding the need to keep our state's financial situation in balance, it is shortsighted and sets a dangerous precedent to continue this trend.

I urge the Legislature to remain true to the Wisconsin Idea -- an idea born out of a desire to create a world-class higher education system. Greater flexibilities for the UW System would go far in insuring the Wisconsin Idea. Flexibilities that include granting Regents the authority to determine annual salaries for faculty and academic staff; allowing higher education institutions to use surplus auxiliary revenues for student-related activities; permitting greater flexibility in promotion and recruitment of nonprofessional classified state employees; and granting 105 percent tuition spending authority for the Regents.

As chancellor of UWSP, I offer myself, staff, and faculty to answer any further questions on the Governor's proposed 1997-99 biennial budget or other higher education legislative matters. Thank you.

Good Morning,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before this committee today. I would like to begin by introducing myself to you so that you can appreciate the diverse viewpoints that I hope to represent.

The main focus of my remarks today are in regard to the Wisconsin Technical College System, however, I bring a somewhat unique perspective that I hope will assist you in your deliberations concerning the new budget. My name is Dan Krcma, and I am an Instructor at Northcentral Technical College here in Wausau. My area of instruction is Small Business Management and Entrepreneurship. Now you may already recognize that given the discipline that I teach and the system in which I teach it, that I am somewhat of an anomaly. You see I teach Free Enterprise and Capitalism, and yet I do it from within a publicly supported institution. It gets better. In addition to my teaching profession, I am also a Small Business owner. I own a

very small construction equipment distributorship that I run with my brother. Because of my interest in Small Business I am a member of the National Federation of Independent Business and I serve on their Wisconsin leadership council. I must tell you that my personal political persuasion is that of both a fiscal and social conservative. It might surprise you then to know that I am also the President of the Northcentral Technical College Faculty Association. We are a registered collective bargaining unit and are affiliated with the Wisconsin Education Association Council (W.E.A.C.). I have held that position for the past year and I was just reelected to serve another year by a 62% margin of our membership. In my role as President of the Faculty Association, I have been serving as a member of the College Presidents Staff. I must tell you that I have a very healthy respect for the challenges in administering a local Technical College.

I hope you can see that given the multitude of roles that I fill I am somewhat of a paradox. A walking contradiction if you will. I believe that because of my unique perspectives I can share with you some thoughts that I hope you find useful in your deliberations. In my multitude of roles I struggle every day with trying to balance diverse and sometimes opposing viewpoints much as I'm sure you must do as elected representatives. I have a profound belief in the importance of a good education, and specifically a technical education that is practical in the workplace. To facilitate that education I believe that we must have good teachers who are dedicated to their students and knowledgeable of their discipline. Those teachers must be fairly compensated and have an environment in which to work that is conducive to the delivery of learning. As a Technical College System we must deliver to the business community graduates who are trained in the skills that business needs to compete in a world economy. And we

must do all this in an manor that makes maximum and efficient use of the financial resources that the taxpayers supply us with.

Let me begin by congratulating you for your efforts in trying to find places to control spending and reduce government. I know that yours is not an easy task, and often not a pleasant one either.

The job of limiting government growth is vital, however, if Wisconsin is going to continue to grow as a major competitor in the international community. I applaud your efforts and the efforts of Governor Tommy Thompson in maintaining tight fiscal control of the state budget and encourage your continued diligence in reducing taxes and regulations on Wisconsin's citizens. I must confess however that I am not here today to make your job easier.

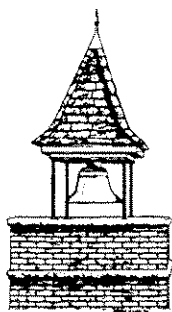
Ladies and Gentlemen I would like to share with you a little about what I see happening in Technical education in the future. I believe that with the advent of communications technology our educational system is on the precipice of dramatic change. If you look in last nights edition of the Wausau Daily Herald you will see an advertisement for a cellular company promoting the ability of making local calls anywhere in Wisconsin. It is clear that the cost of communications is coming down. With the advent of the internet and instantaneous communications, our State, our nation, and our world is embarking on the kind of revolutionary change not seen since the invention of the printing press. Not only information, but education, can now be delivered any where in the world instantaneously. If you look on page three of this weeks edition of U.S. News and World Report you will see an advertisement for "webtv" which is internet access over your television. Anyone with satellite or cable access TV can now be

on the internet. You no longer even need a computer. At NTC we are already delivering courses over the internet. With this new product, NTC will literally have a classroom in everyone's living room, and I mean **everyone's** regardless of where in the world they live. I could go on and on with examples of how technology will impact all of our lives in the future. Much brighter minds than mine, however, can give you these examples and their effects. My purpose today is to tell you that these changes are resulting in dramatic shifts in the way we educate or work force for tomorrow. It is these shifts in the changing educational environment that are straining our resources and hampering our ability to respond to the needs of Wisconsin industry. The Wisconsin Technical College System has a rich history of being the best, most innovative, most efficient, Technical College/Community College system in the nation. I can tell you if we are going to maintain that leadership role we must be flexible, we must be responsive to the needs of

industry and we must have adequate resources. We at NTC will take the leadership role in being flexible and in being responsive, we need your help with the resources.

It is my belief that nowhere in education do Wisconsin taxpayers get more “Bang for the Buck” than in the Technical College System. Recent trends have shown that our student head counts are continuing to rise, even though each student spends less time with us. This has the effect of driving up our costs relative to the full time equivalents that we produce. We have managed to absorb these costs over the last several years by going through the same budget tightening that you are doing now. We are now faced with the prospects of reengineering for the future, however, and we must not under capitalize or under invest in the competitive work force for that future. I’ve told you that I’m a teacher. I’ve told you that

I'm a business owner. I've mentioned that I often represent diverse interests, and I acknowledge that yours is not an easy task. I am asking that you support Wisconsin's best educational system with a 2.5% increase for the next biennium as an investment in the future of Wisconsin's work force. I know that some groups are asking for more. I know that the Governor's budget has proposed less. Given my conservative nature, and my knowledge as a business man who knows the value of a good investment, I feel we must make this commitment for a highly trained productive business environment.



Wausau School District

Longfellow Administration Center

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Charles T. Skurka, Ed.D.
Superintendent of Schools

Berland A. Meyer
Deputy Superintendent /
Assistant Superintendent
Program Development

Cherna A. Gorder
Assistant Superintendent
Business

Joyce C. Saldana, Ph.D.
Assistant Superintendent
Human Resources

TO: Joint Committee on Finance

FROM: David Damgaard, Wausau School District
Director of Pupil Services

RE: Transfer of School AODA Programs from DPI to DHFS (Assembly Bill 100/Senate Bill 77 - Governor's Budget)

As the Director of Pupil Services for the Wausau School District, I am adamantly opposed to the transfer of school AODA programs from DPI to DHFS.

This proposal would dismantle the current AODA prevention programs in our school districts and communities in Wisconsin. The proposal would severely hamper the coordination of AODA programs with the other student services programs. DPI, not DHFS, administers school psychologist and social worker, school age parents, school-based AIDS prevention, pregnancy prevention, school health, school nursing, alcohol and traffic safety, family involvement in education, guidance and counseling, and children at risk programs. This proposal would splinter AODA services to the schools to the extent that programs would become ineffective and administratively burdensome.

Transferring the AODA program dollars would not only splinter AODA services to schools but would also negate the last ten years of school/community prevention efforts. These programs are education programs and are for the benefit of the students, and need to be administered by the educational agencies working with school districts. This proposal would prove confusing regarding grant administration, grant approval, and grant reporting. Why should FAST grants for Families and Schools Together be administered by an agency other than the schools? This is ridiculous!

In the Wausau School District, funding for the 1996-97 school year has provided for Student Peer Leadership and Peer Mediation Training at the elementary, middle and high school levels. School staff have been trained in AODA CORE and Group Facilitation. The training offers accurate knowledge about alcohol and drug abuse as it affects our youth and their families and it sensitizes us to the desperation, rigidity, hopelessness, and pain that many of our students (and adults too) feel because of some form of alcohol and drug abuse. Ideas are presented on ways of taking effective and supportive action to address alcohol and drug abuse as it presents itself in our school system.

Please do not take away the resources that make these and many other programs possible. They are the most effective tools we have to help our students lead healthy, drug-free lives. Do whatever it takes to not allow this proposal to be approved in the governor's budget. I believe you are an advocate for children, and this will hurt our kids!

JOINT COMMITTEE ON FINANCE PUBLIC HEARING
TESTIMONY BY RACHEL SPEAR, WHO BOARD MEMBER
WISCONSIN HOMECARE ORGANIZATION
APRIL 10, 1997

Thank you Mr. Chairman and members of the committee for the opportunity to appear before you today as a member of the board of the Wisconsin Homecare Organization (WHO). My name is Rachel Spear, and in addition to my WHO responsibilities, I am the Homecare Coordinator at Wood County Home Nursing in Wisconsin Rapids. Prior to my supervisory position, I was a staff nurse at Wood County Home Nursing for 15 years.

As a county home care agency, we have seen an increase in the number of MA patients referred to us over the last 1-2 years due to private agencies reducing the number of MA patients they can and well serve. We are a skilled care agency and had a Medicare census of 92% of our caseload in 1995. It has now dropped to 82% due to private home care agencies being more willing to admit the Medicare patient vs the MA patient. County home care agencies do not have the option of refusing a patient because of their reimbursement source. The \$11.05/hr reimbursement for PCW does not cover the wages of our PCW's because they are established by negotiated wage agreements. Therefore, to the extent that we must accept MA patients on our service, we must look for other resources to cover these losses. County Health Departments are continuing to close their home care agencies because County boards are less willing to subsidize home care today. Without an increase in reimbursement for MA patients,

Page Two/Rachel Spear

our agency and other county agencies may not be in business much longer either.

You need to know that MA reimbursement for home care has not increased since 1989-90, yet the CPI during the same 7 years has increased 27.2%. As recently reported, home care agencies are also losing on the reimbursement of other disciplines. This applies to county agencies as well. A skilled nursing visit costs about \$5.55 more per visit and a home health aide is an additional \$3.43 per visit. On average, according to a 1997 survey, Wisconsin's home health providers lose \$10,869 per month on services to Medicaid patients.

As a result of the great discrepancy between home care MA reimbursement and CPI-U cost of living adjustments, all home care agencies have lost substantial market power in recruiting and maintaining the qualified nursing and personal service workers necessary for the provision of care. This results in the loss of access to high quality home care for the patients. These same workers can and do earn a higher wage in the fast food industry or as retail clerks.

At the same time, the 1% increase for MA home care proposed by Governor Thompson would increase reimbursement for skilled nursing by about 75 cents per visit and 38 cents for a home health aide visit. The increase for a PCW is only 11 cents an hour. This doesn't come close to the costs of providing these services.

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In the past, the losses from Medicaid could be covered by revenues from other pay sources. But managed care and changes in Medicare have cut off those sources. Home care-givers and home care agencies are now truly being forced to decide between going bankrupt or getting out of the home care profession. That is a terrible option, particularly for the homebound and the taxpayer.

Times have changed, and the current rate is no longer adequate. Home care agencies simply cannot stay in the home care Medicaid business under the current or proposed reimbursement rate. If the private agencies cannot afford to see MA patients and the county agencies go out of business, the result is the opposite of the desired outcome. Without home care participation, nursing home and hospital stays are extended with a significant increase in state costs and expenditures from taxpayers.